As per the information provided by the States, 45% of the irrigation potential created is through ground water resources and about 47% of the irrigation potential utilized is through ground water. About 85% of the rural drinking water requirement has been assessed to be met from ground water resources.

The Government has constituted the Brahmaputra Board under the Brahmaputra Board Act, 1980 (No. 46 of 1980) for the planning and implementation of measures for the control of flood and bank erosion and matters connected therewith in Brahmaputra Valley.

Subsidized coverage of PDS

*118. DR. ABHISHEK MANU SINGHVI:
SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Planning Commission intends to reduce the burden of subsidized coverage of Public Distribution System (PDS) by extrapolating the 2004 Planning Commission figures on the 2009 population size;

(b) if so, whether it will not dilute the concept of "inclusive growth" which the present UPA Government formed after a decisive mandate wants to achieve;

(c) the total amount allocated and spent on PDS, during 2006-07 and 2008-09, year-wise; and

(d) the projections for PDS allocation and expenditure during 2009-10?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) and (b) For allocation of food grains to States and UTs under Targetted PDS(TPDS), Department of Food and Public Distribution uses the number of BPL families based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission and population estimates of the Registrar General of India as on 1st March, 2000. This number of BPL families is 6.52 crore, which include 2.43 crore Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families. However, as reported by end of October, 2009, the State and UT Governments have issued 10.96 crore BPL ration cards, which includes 2.43 crore AAY cards. No steps have been taken by the Planning Commission to reduce the burden of subsidized coverage of PDS.

(c) Total food subsidy released during 2006-07 to 2008-09 is as under:—

(Rs. in crore)

Year	Subsidy released
2006-07	23,827.59
2007-08	31,259.68
2008-09	43,668.08

(d) Total requirement of food subsidy estimated for 2009-10 (Revised Estimates) is Rs. 67,609 crore. This includes subsidy for TPDS, Other Welfare Schemes, Buffer Subsidy, Subsidy on open market sale scheme and arrears of previous years.

Allocation of 3G spectrum

*119. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether allocation of 3-G Spectrum has been decided to be made through an auction process;

(b) if so, salient details of the process decided to be pursued for the same *vis-à-vis* recommendations and advice, if any, given by TRAI, Finance Ministry and other agencies;

(c) the details of advantages, if any, envisaged for cellular phone consumers owing to 3-G spectrum availability;

(d) the details of the period when the final decision regarding the process taken by Government, indicating the period when the process is finally expected to be completed; and

(e) the reasons for prolonging the process?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) (i) **Auction Process**: TRAI has recommended in 2006 that 3G spectrum should be auctioned so as to ensure efficient utilization of this scarce resource. As per the guidelines issued in August/September, 2008, Department of Telecommunications (DoT) announced that 3G spectrum shall be auctioned through a controlled, simultaneous, ascending e-auction.

(ii) **Reserve Price**: Department of Telecommunication (DoT) has suggested Pan India reserve price of Rs. 2020 crores per one block of 2 × 5 MHz of 3G spectrum in 2.1 GHz band which was agreed to by TRAI. Finance Ministry has suggested further doubling the reserve price from Rs. 2020 crores to Rs. 4040 crores for the same spectrum block. Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) in the meeting held on August 27, 2009 has decided to keep a pan India reserve price of Rs. 3500 crores for the same spectrum block.

(c) 3G systems support increased data communication, hence they allow high speed data transfer of at least 144 kbps, mobile Internet access, entertainment, and triple-play converged communications services on the Cellular Mobile Phone of the consumer.

(d) Revised Information Memorandum indicating the various aspects associated with the 3G auction has been issued on 23/10/2009 and published on Department of Telecommunications (DoT) website. The time line for 3G auction, mentioned in the Revised Information Memorandum, is given in the Statement (*See* below).